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THE PILGRIMAGE

VOL. I

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on 15 October, 2018

"As a gossamer, the handiwork of dream,"—page 44

THE PILGRIMAGE

BY

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"FROM THE EASTERN SEA" ETC.

16738

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KAMAKURA

THE VALLEY PRESS

JAPAN

VIGO STREET

ELKIN MATHEWS

LONDON

1909

SECOND EDITION

22-9-70

46738

[illegible]

895.61

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The Kyobunkwan Press

Ginza, Tokyo

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PROEM

Beckoned by an appointed hand, unseen yet sure, in holy air,
We wander as a wind, silver and free,
With one song in heart, we, the children of prayer.

Our song is not of a city's fall;
No laughter of a kingdom bids our feet wait;
Our heart is away, with sun, wind and rain:
We, the shadowy roamers on the holy highway.

THE PILGRIMAGE

"THE NEW ART"

She is an art (let me call her so)
Hung, as a web, in the air of perfume,
Soft yet vivid, she sways in music:
(But what sadness in her saturation of life!)
Her music lives in intensity of a moment and then dies;
To her, suggestion is her life.
She left behind the quest of beauty and dream:
Is her own self not the song of dream and beauty itself?
(I know she is tired of ideal and problem and talk.)
She is the moth-light playing on reality's dusk,
Soon to die as a savage prey of the moment;
She is a creation of surprise (let me say so),
Dancing gold on the wire of impulse.
What an elf of light and shadow!
What a flash of tragedy and beauty!

GHOST

By the very way she shook her hair
That troubled her eyes to look the road of wind,
(She shook her hair as a tree the dead leaves of thoughts,)
Lord—a—mercy . . . . I knew her well,
She was my old love, though when she began to be I forget.
(The dead thoughts of leaves of a tree flap and flap.)
In her whisper, silver and slow as that of a stream,
I hear something akin, that I dare not forget, though I know not what,
(" O the ghost of the age and midnight," I exclaimed:
At this minute the clock struck one . . .)
She whispers as a stream with the old music of beliefs.
(The old beliefs of music of a stream run and run.)

BY THE ENGAKUJI TEMPLE: MOON NIGHT

Through the breath of perfume,
(O music of musics!)
Down creeps the moon
To fill my cup of song
With memory's wine.

Across the song of night and moon,
(O perfume of perfumes!)
My soul, as a wind
Whose heart's too full to sing,
Only roams astray . . .

Down the tide of the sweet night
(O the ecstasy's gentle rise!)

The birds, flowers and trees
Are glad at once to fall
Into Oblivion's ruin white.

THE VIOLET

On one night,
When breezes and mists were grey with one sad memory
(The stars had lost their way to their posts)
I stood upon the street:
I felt as I were older than a star.
I watched the people passing by.
Phantoms were they not?
Were they not part of the ashen air?
I thought they were more glad to disappear than to exist:
They were no more distinct than their shadows on the ground.
Some tempting odour as from a happy dale
Made them bend forward with hurrying step.

I watched them for many an hour :

Suddenly a girl's shape caught my eyes.

" Thou art my lover lost," I cried.

How well I remembered her slightly turned face

Like a flower in rapture with God's bliss !

' T was her old manner to show her ankles small,

Her dress flapping lik her own heart.

Her tassels of hair hung as of yore,

Like whispering grasses on the sky-road.

I rushed forth : " My O Yen, my beloved !

O Yen San was my old lover lost,

I knew not how long ago,—

Surely it was in another happier world !

Alas, she vanished.

In vain I ran after her.

Only a bunch of violets was left behind ;

The soul of the flower was O Yen's soul.

A violet, dear one fed by gossamer and shower,

In the bosom of light and wind!

'T was many a year ago I bade thee farewell,

Leaving the path of beauty and love,

To wander towards city and dust,

Tell me, Violet, does O Yen love me no more?

Pray, open thy soul of Spring and smile,

Let me dream awhile upon my sweet past!

So, my soul smitten by noise and storm,

Is like a dead leaf on the stream to the Unseen

TO A NIGHTINGALE

Creator of the only one song!
Triumph, rapture and art thou tellest
But with thy self-same word, what mystery!
I've a few more songs and dreams than thou,
(Alas, my words not serving at my command!)
I tremble, hesitate before I sing:
What carelessness in thy rush with song,
Splendour is thine to sing into air, be forgotten!
Thou singest out, thou pushest thy song's way,
Without regard to the others waiting their turns,
(Pity the other birds and poets!)
What a sweet bit of thy barbarism!
I know not technically what thy song means:

I take thee not only for a bird but the poet.
Thou art a revolter against prosody ;
What a discoverer of the newest language !
A man's life and art are disturbed by thy song,
(What exhaustion in thy voice,
What a feast and sensation of thy life !)
When thou changest him to become thy kin,—
A thing of simplicity and force ;
Thy song stops, thou fliest away.
Oh, can thy work be done so swift ?
Didst thou see thy song's future in him ?
Thou art suggestion : what a fragment of art !

I AM LIKE A LEAF

The silence is broken : into the nature
  My soul sails out,
Carrying the song of life on his brow,
  To meet the flowers and birds.

When my heart returns in the solitude,
  She is very sad,
Looking back on the dead passions
  Lying on Love's ruin.

I am like a leaf
  Hanging over hope and despair,
Which trembles and joins
  The world's imagination and ghost.

TO THE SUNFLOWER

Thou burstest from mood :

How sad we have to cling to experience !

Marvel of thy every atom burning in life,

How fully thou livest !

Didst thou ever think to turn to cold and shadow ?

Passionate liver of sunlight,

Symbol of youth and pride ;

Thou art a lyric of thy soaring colour ;

Thy voicelessness of song is action.

What absorption of thy life's meaning,

Wonder of thy consciousness,—

Mighty sense of thy existence !

BY THE DAIBUTSU AT KAMAKURA

Above the old songs turned to ashes and pain,
Under which Death enshrouds the idols and trees with mist
of sigh,
(Where are Kamakura's rising days and life of old?)
With heart heightened to hush, the Daibutsu forever sits:
O, holiness, holiness of triumph and voicelessness!
At times, the lone pilgrims in whiteness of prayer,
Called by the sudden voice of shadow, chanting the dream,
Are seen as the swallows upon the sadness of seas:
O the ghosts stirring the ruins of faith from mortal heart!
Leave not the world and humanity to be wholly lost,
Save the idols and songs from the centuries' sigh,
Build again the house of light on the prayer of Earth:

Where is the world with the Nirvana sky and thrill of
faith?

I pray and again pray, "*Namu amida butsu.*"*
On the ground the pale shadows of the Daibutsu and
myself,—
The moon swings through the greyness of sad trees and eve;
With the Idol and moon I here step with my head bent:
We three in the rapture of Eternity and silence!

* Adoration to Lord Buddha.

SHADOW

My song is sung, but a moment . . . . .
The song of voice is merely the body, (the body dies,)
And the real part of the song, its soul, remains after it is
sung:
Yea, it remains in the vibration of thy waves of heart-sea
Echoing still my song, (O shadow my song threw!)
In thy heart's thrill I see my far truer and whiter soul,
And through my soul thou soarest out of thy dust and
griefs.

. . . . . Spring passed,
(Spring in roses and birds is merely the body,)
And I see the greater Spring (O soul-shadow she left!)

In the Summer forest, luminous in green and dream :
Oh to be that Spring over the world's Summer valley,
O shadow I may cast in the after-age, O my shadow of soul !

THE LOTUS

The cry of wind in my heart,
My thought darkened by memory of night,
I walk on the phantom road
Towards the sea of silence.

The lone lotus whiter than prayer,
Before me rose, tall as a dream,
With the sunlight fallen through the clouds,
The flower smiled the sorrow of Heaven.

As a fire consumed, her beauty is clear,
Each petal chanting the song of star;
Love and desire are in her heart;
I know she came from the blessing of morn.

In her voice of dew she says :

" The gate of sorrow is Heaven's gate,

The price of admittance is only the tear ;

The fire of silence makes thy soul white."

O holy goddess of lotus, I bow down to thee,

Holy goddess of love, holy Kwanzeon,

Queen of sorrow and of the shining heart,

Lead me to the shore where waits the ship of gold !

GHOST OF ABYSS

My dreams rise when the rain falls : the sudden songs
Flow about my ears as the clouds in June ;
And the footsteps, lighter than the heart of wind,
Beat, now high, then low, before my dream-flaming eyes.

" Who am I ? " said I. " Ghost of abyss," a Voice replied,
" Piling an empty stone of song on darkness of night,
Dancing wild as a fire, only to vanish away."

SONG IN AIR

Like a rainbow,
All the colour, all the music,
And all the touch,
She suddenly rises
Over the breast of shadow :
How the world turns to a song !
She is liberation and life.
Hers is a nerve-thrill,
Not a thought nor truth ;
Mystically
She breathes in and out
Art (let me call it so) ;
And when she more suddenly falls,
What a song-lost world !

THE FANTASTIC SNOW-FLAKES

Bah! What fantastic snow-flakes, eh,
Dancing merrily, ha! ha! ha!
Lo, their tiny feet raising so!

Death is sweet, to be sure,
Laughing they go to death,
What delicious teeth, ha! ha! ha!

Suppose we die together, eh,
With the snow dying upon a pond?
What a fantastic end, ha! ha! ha!

What a fantastic end to die
In the dying music of ancient love!
Behold the snow and music die!

What a coward, ha ! ha ! ha !

Are you afraid to die, eh ?

Still you love a little caprice of world ?

What fantastic snow-flakes, ha ! ha ! ha !

To leave no sorrow and to die !

Such a coward, you my beloved !

M. A. C.

She gathered sobs of Autumn,
Her eyes opened to every shape of sorrow
As in the moment of farewell with life:
Her life was a black December night.
She learned to spell the words of tears
Before she was born, her radiant sad voice
Was like that of a midnight star.
As the silent moonlight over a weary rose,
The darkness strangely wrapped her thought.
Her face struggled to choose one saddest dream
From a thousand dreams which hung like clouds.
She walked in the night land abandoned by Light,—
A hollow echoing the cry of Death

Where grey phantoms wandered by.

There was nothing more dreadful unto her

Than speech of man : she had fled from it

As from Winter Storm ; she was glad to die

As a Summer night breeze into the golden bosom of the moon.

MEDITATION ON A CHINESE TEA CUP

Fill me a cup with the tea ancient-browed, Cathay in heart,
(What a forlorn look of the empty cup !)
And let me dream the Confucius land of dragon and
dream.

The moon of very old gold stares far down :
Art thou, Chinese moon, wearied of wisdom and song ?
What an Autumnal face softer than a soft sigh,
What an oblivion sweeter than a sweet death !
Hear the whisper of ecstasy and forgotten love
In Opium's yellow smell, eternal and free !
Here in the opium den, powerless are Time's teeth,
And Vice sleeps on Fancy's delicious breast :

See the smokers with bodies like a fallen pagoda,
Putting their souls at pawn for the whitest sleep.
Is it the blast of a rebellion's cry?
Nay, a mandarin prince with a long pipe
Windily parades with slaves like hurrying leaves,
With a thousand banners, with drums and flutes.
Oh, I pray to see again
A Chinese damsel of beauty like a far-off song,
Shaking her shoulders of butterfly's wings,
Stepping uncertain like the shiver of a lily's stem,
Through the adoring eyes of a tidal crowd.

Fill me a cup with the tea ancient-browed, Cathay in heart,
(What a forlorn look of the empty cup!)
And let me dream the Confucious land of dragon and
dream.

Oh, I pray to hear again

A Chinese music sad like the heart of a forest spirit:

I'll cry like a Winter wind

Towards Love and 'Far-Beyond.'

THE POET

The roses live by eating of their own beauty and then die :
He too is fed on his own poem.
His poem ? Yea, his very flesh in the grasp of the moment !
What a cry of the soul and flesh in the grasp of the moment !
(O Moment with the very life of what thou art,
Thou who hast no past hast no future,
Didst make thy life from the death of the moment before ?)
The roses live by eating of their own beauty and then die :
His song is the funeral chant for his own death of every moment ;
Through death, or birth, (he is the poet of the moment and life,)

Into the menace of human life he awakes.

The roses live by eating of their own beauty and die:

His flesh and soul shall ruin themselves as the bones,

And float as shipwrecked masts over the greyness of waste.

ZEPHYR

Zephyr comes unaware,
And sings underneath my arms:
When it makes a sudden stop,
I will finish the song of its wandering soul.

Zephyr comes like a Beauty
Underneath my arms smiling, smiling.
She looks upon me, and says:
"Shall we hide us from birds and men under the roses?"

Zephyr comes with doleful heart,
Sighing, sighing, underneath my arms.
I whisper a tale of a Life of Gold,
We fly into the Palace of the Sun.

FANTASIA

Bits of straw and clay and woman's hair,—
So shall be builded my house:
Oh to lose the world and gain a song!
Let the clouds flit through the window at the left;
The dancers shapeless in pain and pride,
From the right dance in as a tide:
A spirit of pagan days, sick in joy,
That rose at the sound of their stamping feet,
I'll sing a song that makes the seas the hills.
(Morality begins, I am afraid, where I stop my song.)
Rags to roll me in, pieces of dream,
So with my heart of nocturnal fear;
I have choice of the sky red in memory and art.

Let the stars fall in the garden rose :

The leaves and my souls in a thousand guises

Hurry to the ground to build a grave.

AT THE YUIGAHAMA SHORE BY KAMAKURA

Into the homelessness of the sea I awoke :
  Oh, my heart of the wind and spray !
I am glad to be no-man to-day
  With the laughter and dance of the sea-soul.

Dip the song of the sea and wind,
  Throw it into my heart of longing !
I like to be with the clan of the waters and air :
  Oh, my soul of the sea-soul and surge !

Roll in the wonder of the heart and sea,—
  Oh, my joy of the sea-soul and flash !
Gather all the lights of the wind and sea,
  To guard against the blackest night.

AUTUMN SONG

The gold vision of a bird-wind sways on the silver foam of song,
The oldest song rises again on the Autumn heart of dream.

The ghost castle of glory is built by the sad magic of Time,
With the last laughter of sorrow, and with the red tempest of leaves.

My little soul born out of the dews of singing dawn,
Bids farewell to the large seas of Life and speech.

THE ADDRESS OF A WOMAN TO HER HUSBAND

Thou art, O great lord, like a sea
Stretching the bosom vast for forgiveness :
Into thy bosom I peep with fear that is woman's joy.
With thee I trust as with the sinking sun that will rise again ;
Spring and Life are thy lights :
Around the lights I cling like a shadow,
With my heart of whisper and love.
How glad I am to have myself lost in thy bliss
Like a firefly flashing a little lantern
Into the golden tempest of moonbeams !
The morning sun blows away a candle of dew :
Like the dew I am content in my helplessness.

I stand against thy blinding white soul,
With sensation that only a summer insect knows:
I am a mote in thy mighty radiance.
Oh, what chance or Nature made thee so great!
My daily task is to recollect the sweetness of thy love,
And to find the glorious dawn of Life,
With fire in speech and in kisses:
Thy breath and promise make my life beauteous.
I flatter myself thinking that thou canst not live without me,
Since I am like a moon unto thy diadem of night:
Oh, tell me, is this ecstasy my real life?
Are we living in a hidden love dale
Without a mortal sky above,
But eternally dim with yearning in air,
Far away from the road of Death?

Give me thy wings of heart,
And we will fly into the song of beauty,
And stare down through the dreaming breeze
Over the flowers red and gold,
With one eye which is thine and mine.
Thy soul, O great lord, is like a heavenly gate;
Beyond the gate all the loves gather:
Against the gate I place my hungry ears,
With my heart mortally ravished in desire:
The manna of another happiness softly fall
Over me, as dews drop along a morning highway.
Thy footsteps are ever stepping on to the house of God:
I follow after thy footsteps in prayer.
I am a bird fed by the shadows of thy love,
Singing the song of nightingale,
In the woodland of thy fancy

Over the valley of thy dream:

In song and in thy face my life would be eternal.

From thy face the freshest breath of leaves steals:

Thou art a pine tree upon the hill,

With the balmy song of Immortality,

Changeless in Spring and in Winter;

I am a weak vine climbing up by thee,

And earn the bliss to meet with a star.

Thou art a welome mountain nest

Where I fly as a midinight wind

With hoary heart and revolting thought:

Thou art a river, and I am a ripple in its bosom.

O great lord, let us rise towards the west

To face the departing sun,—

West where paradise lies, (as I am told),

West, saintly region of Repose!

We will lie down with our sorrowless hearts
Open under the sun-set fires,
And send our souls beyond into the space,
Into the repose and into Paradise :
And then we will turn home under the gathering night,
Oh, how rich I am with a book of poems and with thy voice !

THE TEMPLE BELL

Trembling in its thousand ages,
Dark as its faith,
It wails, hunting me,
(It's a long time since I lost my faith,)
Up through the silence with a scorn,
Heavy but not unkind,
Out of the dusk of the temple and night
Into my heart of dusk,
Hushed after my song of cities played,
Weary and grey in thought.
My heart replies to the wail of the bell,
Slow-bosomed in sadness and faith,
With my memory rising from dusts.
Namu amida butsu ! Namu amida butsu !

TO THE CICADA

What a sudden pain of ancient soul,—
A tear that is a voice, the voice that is a tear!
What unforgotten tragedy thou tellest in thy break of heart!
Min, min, min, min, minminminminminmin . . .

Grey singer of the forest with heart of fire,
Dost thou cry for the world, or for my love and life?
Is thy monotony of voice the tragedy of my song?
Min, min, min, min, minminminminminmin . .

The soul that reads the sorrow of life knows thy heart:
Cry till the world and life gain the triumph of Death!
Let us earn Death through the tragedy of Faith!

O singer of sad Faith and only one song,—
Cry out thy old dream of life and tears!
Min, min, min, min, minminminminmin . . .

THE LADY OF UTAMARU'S ART

Too common to say she is the beauty of line,
However, the line old, spiritualized into odour,
(The odour soared into an everlasting ghost from life and death,)
As a gossamer, the handiwork of dream,
'Tis left free as it flaps :
The lady of Utamaru's Art is the beauty of zephyr flow.
I say again, the line with the breath of love,
Enwrapping my heart to be a happy prey :
Sensuous ? To some so she may appear,
But her sensuousness divinized into the word of love.
To-day I am with her in silence of twilight eve,
And am afraid she may vanish into the mist.

THE BUDDHA PRIEST IN MEDITATION

He is a style of monotony,

His religion is aloofness,

Is there any simplicity more beautiful?

What a grand leisure in his walk

On the road of mystery:

Is there any picture more real,

More permanent than he?

He surrenders against faith:

He walks on mystery's road,—that is enough,

He never quests why.

He feels a touch beyond word,

He reads the silence's sigh,

And prays before his own soul and destiny:

He is a pseudonym of the universal consciousness,
A person lonesome from concentration.
He is possessed of Nature's instinct,
And burns white as a flame;
His morality and accident of life
No longer exist,
But only the silence and soul of prayer.

IN THE INLAND SEA

Here the waters of wine with far-off desires,
Here the April breezes with purple flashes familiar and yet
forgotten,
Oh, here the twilight of the Inland Sea,
Here I hear a song without a word,
(Is it the song of my flying soul ?)
That's the song of my dream I dreamed a thousand years
ago,
Oh, my dream of the fairy world, oh, the beauty of the
Inland Sea !
I sail and sail to-day in this fairy sea,
(O my heart, hear the sailors' song of life !)
I sail leaving the welcoming isles far behind,

(Hear the isles bidding adieu, O my heart!)

I sail towards the chanting sky.

O birds with white souls, steer my soul with white love,

Here the sea of my dream, Oh, the beauty of the Inland Sea!

LITTLE FAIRY

Little Fairy,

Little Fairy by a hearth,

Flight in thine eyes,

Hush on thy feet,

Shall I go with thee up to Heaven

By the road of the fire-flame?

Little Fairy,

Little Fairy by a river,

Dance in thy heart,

Longing at thy lips,

Shall I go down with thee to 'Far-Away'

Rolling over the singing bubbles?

Little Fairy,

Little Fairy by a poppy,

Dream in thy hair,

Solitude under thy wings,

Shall I sleep with thee to-night in the golden cup,

Under the stars?

O YOSHI SAN

With a fan, with the little joy of Japan,
Dance you O Yoshi San :
Your dress, red and white, flashes on
Like the falling leaves of dream.

Your odour of silver breast
Returns as from a hidden road,
Fairy girl, your footsteps
Are the echoes of memory gold ;

In your dark eyes I read
My unfulfilled desire of age :
With whispers, with a diamond heart,
I kneel to you like a sigh.

O vision of love of Japan,

O my returning memory,

Are you not the shadow of my soul,

Speak, speak, you fairy girl!

BIRD OF SILENCE

Older than love and tears,
Bird of silence born before the world and wind were made,
Lonely ghost away from laughter and life,
Wing down, I welcome thee,
From the skies of thoughts and stars,
Bird of Silence, mystery's brother, as white
And aloof as is mystery,
Tired of humanity and of voice,
With thee, bird of Silence, I long to sail
Beyond the seas where Time and sorrows die,
Bird of silence, dweller of eternity and space,
Make me live in the thought before dawn was born,
I lost the voice as a willow spray

To whom a thrill is its golden song,

As a lotus whose break of cup

Is the sudden cry after aerial dance.

MY SOUL AND HARP

I have laid my harp on the grass,
The clouds fly.
My soul follows the clouds afar,
With the breezes.

My soul flew, and tired, and returned to the grass.
The harp was waiting for my touch of hands.
Harp, my Love, we shall never part,
Oh, never, again!

My harp, we shall not sing our greefs
Under the moon:
Thy strings and my soul
Lo! are turning to gold.

Let me, O Moon and my harp, forget the world and Life,

In the depth of night!

(In yonder orchard there

The flowers are breathing odours alone.)

KYOTO

Mist-born Kyoto, the city of scent and prayer,
Like a dream half-fading, she lingers on :
The oldest song of a forgotten pagoda bell
Is the Kamo river's twilight song.

The girls, half whisper and half love,
As old as a straying moon beam,
Flutter on the streets gods built,
Lightly carrying Spring and passion.

" Stop a while with me," I said.
They turned their powdered necks. How delicious !
" No, thank you, some other time," they replied.
Oh, such a smile like the breath of a rose !

SONG'S WAY

Song's way is twilight-still,
She comes riding on the sigh of a reed,
Her home is the bosom of the wind;
Fairy unseen, with longing of rain,
Wandering ghost of rain, sad and grey,
Voiceless ghost with rapture of light,
To surprise thee from behind is her joy,
Butterfly seeking mystery to the stars,
Bird roaming the castles of clouds,
To command her I have no power,
But here at the twilight place,
In the twilight of the day,
I sit yearning for her sight of wonder;
O spirit of a thousand faces and thoughts,
Make me live again in the song of old!

MY LITTLE BIRD

My little bird,

My bird born in my Mother's tears,

She flies,

Stretching her wings so,

And from under her wings she drops my Mother's message:

"Come home, Beloved!"

Running out from my Mother's bosom,

My little river,

She suddenly stopped her song,

And looking up to the sun,

She in her ripples flashed my Mother's message:

"Beloved, come home!"

My roses,

My little roses grow in my Mother's breath,

They are sad to-day,

Casting their faces down;

On their petals I read my Mother's message:

"Come home, Beloved!"

OH, MY LONG SORROW

The stream hastes to an Eden's shady nook :

Its silvery steps are my Beauty's to meet with the moon.

Oh, long stream !

Oh, my long sorrow !

A breeze disappears under the willow's swing :

Its yellow laughters are my Beauty's along a lily road.

Oh, long willow's swing !

Oh, my long sorrow !

A swallow soars into the soul of the Sun :

Its way is my Beauty's to conquer all my heart.

Oh, long swallow's soar !

Oh, my long sorrow !

My tears fall over a rose gazing down;

The breath of the rose is my Beauty's, half love, half scorn,

Oh, long silence of the rose!

Oh, my long sorrow!

THE NIGHT KOTO PLAYER

The thought of her presence (a bit of flesh and love)
Makes the dusk of night the dusk of perfume.

Sudden as a kiss her rings glow;
Over the dusk strings her fingers flow as a wave.

O the breeze of melody of her heart and that of the night,
The ghost musical that dies into the pang of dream!

THE CALLING CRY

Already in the morn the Sun hears the cry—
The calling cry from the heart of the West.
Oh, my bird, are you hurrying back the road,
Hearing the calling cry from your far-'way nest?

My gentle soul, tarry, and sing the song, while the flowers bloom!
(Do you hear the calling cry from the path to the Unseen?)
The flowers and Spring will soon be dead:
The road for their spirits shall be your road beyond.
Will you not journey together with them, Soul my beloved?
But, tarry a while!

"SHINNEN OMEDETO" *

Again the First-Day of the year, again the Mother-Earth
is glad:
Again she steps in her white smile with the Sun—
Such a golden sun in the depth of the sky.
Lo, he lifts and lifts his shield,
He flashes and flashes mystery of his sword,
He moves and moves like a gold full of Silence and Love,
He looks and looks, and he loves and loves her, brave and
soft:
Hail, hail, this is the white First-Day of year.
He rises and rises reddened in his passion,
He reaches and reaches round her waist,
And holds and holds her sure like a Man,

* I wish you a happy new year.

He kisses and kisses, he embraces and embraces,

He nurses and nurses, he warms and warms in his Love,

And again he kisses, and again he embraces her—the Mother-Earth.

Aye, to-day the Sun is glad and the Mother-Earth is glad again:

Hail, hail, white First-Day of the year!

HER WEAPONS ARE A SMILE AND A LITTLE FAN

Her weapons are a smile and a little fan.

Sayonara, sayonara . . .

Her bent neck like that of a stork

Seeking a jewel of heart in the ground!

Her wisdom is folded sweet in her bosom.

Sayonara, sayonara . . .

Her flapping robe like a cloud

That follows a lyirc of butterfly!

Her song is on her tips of naked feet.

Sayonara, sayonara . . .

Beat of her wooden clogs

Playing the unseen strings of love!

THE PASSING OF SUMMER

An empty cup whence the light of passion is drunk!—
To-day a sad rumour passes through the trees,
A chill wind is borne by the stream,
The waves shiver in pain;
Where now the cicada's song long and hot?

THE PILGRIMAGE

Vol. II

THE PILGRIMAGE

BY

YONE NOGUCHI

AUTHOR OF

"FROM THE EASTERN SEA" ETC.

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KAMAKURA
THE VALLEY PRESS
JAPAN
VIGO STREET
ELKIN MATHEWS
LONDON
1909
SECOND EDITION

LL-9-70

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MY HEART

Oh Lord, is it the reflection of my heart of fire?

Is it, my Lord, the sunset flashes of the Western sky?

Oh Lord, is it the echo of my heart of unrest?

Is it, my Lord, the cry of a sea breaking on the sand?

Oh Lord, is it the voice of my sorrowful heart?

Is it, my Lord, the wail of a wind seeking the road in the dark?

Oh Lord, is it the dripping tears of my heart?

Is it, my Lord, the rain carrying tragedy from the Heavens?

AN AUTUMN DIRGE*

I sat down, one night, with a book,
(Book, Night and Solitude with me);
A sudden voice towards the South and West swept on.
It began like the sigh of a breeze
Along the path of poesy and Love, under the moon,
And it grew to the stir of waves upon the shore:
Then what a roar of breakers of the mad night,
Amid the wind and rains with fire on tongue!
The voice burst on the hanging bell:
The pendants alarmed to the voice.
It was like the soldiers' march,
Their eyes set upon the enemy and stars,

*Varied somewhat from an old Chinese poem.

With no shout of orders in the air,

But the stamp of the feet chanting Victory.

"Boy, what noise is that?" I said. "Go forth, and see!"

"Sir, the moon shines, the 'Silver River' girdles the sky:

Without, no sound of men is heard,

But only the murmur of trees and stars."

"Autumn! Autumn!" I cried.

"Is it thus, O boy, that Autumn comes?

Autumn, the frost-eyed, with ill heart!

Autumn, season of Tragedy and mists,

Autumn, season of ashen sky without clouds,

(How my soul longs to sail in Poesy by the clouds!)

Autumn, season of blasts and tears,

Autumn, season of emptiness and dusts!

Autumn comes close with icy breath,
And falls on Life with a sudden shout.
All the gowns of green of the forest and field
Will be cast in the ruiner 's face:
Autumn, the executioner, solemn in black,
With many-angled temper and swords,
Autumn, the Demon, with wings in the air of Death!
How we loved Spring-days of birth and laughter!
How sad is the hour when maturity passes!
The roses and trees in grey season must die.
A hundred cares pain our human hearts,
Our desires mark wrinckles on our brows,
And our Selves bend underneath the weight of Life.
How hastily our eyes are turned towards decay,
While our feet strive on the Perfection road,
Smelling the odours of flowers unknown!

O boy, where is an eternal frame for man?

And who is it, but himself, that steals his strength away?

Tell me, O boy, how shall he charge

Against the Autumn blast fallen on his back?"

My innocent boy was asleep under the cricket's song.

LET US MARCH TOWARDS MANCHURIA

Mikado, Emperor of Emperors, fed by Love and prophecy,
Now his blood boils under the whirlwind of anger,
He does not sleep beneath the wintry stars:
The splendour of his mind is the stars' mind.
Eight hundred and eight gods guarding Japan
Place their Faith in his bosom, the Castle of Patience.
His presence is the presence of Holy Fuji,
The steadfastness of Japan, the glory of Asia,
A god born out of the vastness of the Eastern Seas.

He proclaims in a voice like a step of Earthquake:
"How long Justice has been lost from the world!
How long Light and Love have been dead!
Let here with us be the red Judgement Day!

Let us build a god's world as our father built!

Behold, Sun and Moon never disturb one another's realm!

Let us drive away the nation invading a neighbour's domain!

Let us teach them to respect another's right!

Let from this day righteousness return again!"

Is it the midnight voice of a sea charging to the moon?

Is it the cry of a wind through the woodland?

Nay, trumpets calling all the soldiers to arms!

Is it the blast of a lightning piercing the sky?

Nay, soldiers' sword answering the Mikado's command!

Come, brothers, from the valleys of centuries' peace,

Come, brothers, from the fields with grapes of prosperity,

Let us stand to arms!

Let us march towards Manchuria!

Is it the sob of the mothers we leave behind?

Is it our lovers' farewell echoing in our ears?

Nay, our swords impatient stir in the scabbards!

Hark, trumpets blow calling to arms!

Let us march towards Manchuria!

Let us sweep in like a northern tempest!

Written at the time of the Russo-Japan War.

THE LOTUS WORSHIPERS

From dale and hill the worshipers steal
In whitest robes: yea, with whitest souls.
They sit around the holy pond, the louts home,
Their finger-tips folded like the hushing lotus-buds
Thrust through the water and twilight, nun-like,
And they pray (the silent prayer that is higher than the
prayer of speech).
The stars and night suddenly cease their song,
The air and birds begin to stir.
(O Resurrection, Resurrection of World and Life!)
Lo, Sun ascend! The lotus buds flash with hearts parted,
With one chant "Namu, Amida!"
The stars disappear, nay, they fall in their hearts.

The worshipers turn their silent steps towards their homes,
Learning the stars will fall in their truthful souls,
That the road of sunlight is the road of prayer,
And for Paradise.
Their faces shining under the sun's blessing gold,
They chant the divine name along the woodland.

LINES

The sun I worship,
Not for the light, but for the shadows of the trees he draws:
O shadows welcome like an angel's bower,
Where I build Summer-day dreams!
Not for her love, but for the love's memory,
The woman I adore:
Love may die, but not the memory eternally green—
The well where I drink Spring ecstasy.
To a bird's song I listen,
Not for the voice, but for the silence following after the song:
O Silence fresh from the bosom of voice!—
Melody from the Death-Land whither my face does ever turn!

THE EASTERN SEA

I say my farewell to the Western cities:
I will return to the Eastern Sea,—
To my isle kissed first ever by the sun,—
I will now go to my sweetest home,
And lay there my griefs on a mountain's breast,
And give all my songs to the birds, and sleep long.
A wind may stir the forest, I may awake,
I will whistle my joy of Life up to a cloud:
The life of the cloud will be my life there.

How tall my lover now would be!
She was two inches shorter than I long ago.
When mid the wistarias the moon-lantern is lit,
I and she will steal to measure our heights

By their drooping flowers—drooping calm like peace.

Shall she win, I will pay her my kisses seven:

I will take her seven kisses if I win:

So all the same the kisses shall be mine.

Then we will walk by the idols—the saint's and poet's,

And assure them that Life is but Love:

With Love and Chrysanthemum I will remain forever.

New York, 1904.

THE SONG OF SONGS, WHICH IS THE MIKADO'S

Sons of the Island, whose dark eyes beam the stainless
glory of thy snowy souls,
Sing the beauty of the goddess' robes on the trees!—Aye,
sing the cherry blossoms bloom!
The April clouds—flowers in disguise—floating down from
the heaven above,
Lodge on the land—that land the Lord called forth in the
midst of the waters.
The Muse colours the mirror-river that runs as a vein of the
earth
With the flowers of deep passion that glow on the banks.

Daughters of the Mikado, who roam among the cherry blooms,—

Ye seem as maiden goddesses love-chattering in the paradise of the clouds.

I love the Spring—I love the flowers' smile that enveils my soul—

I awaken from a dream in the ensainted garden where gods chant the perfection of the sorrowless world.

The earth oft drinks the sweet wine of the rain;

The heaven of the Spring blushes musing on the flowers' beauty.—Oh, sunset fires of the western sky!

Be then rather out under the sky than in thy home,—we dare not in sleep lose the time of the Spring of the night!

The flowers breathe celestial odours that curl as messengers unto the heaven;

The painter-Moon brushes the ground with the dreamy
shadows of the cherry blossoms.

Behold, the Lady, pale and shy as willow leaves, (O,
Spirit of the Flower!)

Smiles, leaning on the tree, looking beyond over the
western nation clamouring in the market.

Written in 1898.

TO A TEMPLE GARDEN

I that sit in your haven am a sea-tossed boat;
I lay my body and sail under your breath.
You that pitied me, you that greeted me,—
Oh, what a scent that is the Lord Buddha's!
Here the air, mist-purple, is laden with prayer;
Ah, let me join to your prayer and soul! (Ah, Holiness,
Holiness!)
Touch me, heal my sea-wounded heart:
Your hand, blessed, is but the Nirvana's

THE MOON LIGHT

When the moon falls upon the bosom of earth
With never a spoken word, as in prayer the earth cries
The whitest of all sighs, (the two hearts in one blessing !)
And upon the grass I alone stand and gaze
Over the world's beauty of ruin, the highest.

O, wash me and wash me again with thy light,
And burn my body to turn to a flame of soul !
It is this moment that I conquer the intervention of flesh,
And its rebellions that worked at unexpected time,
It's not too much to say I am a revelation or a wonder,
Winging as a falcon into the breast of loveliness and air.

SHE SAYS SHE LEFT LITERATURE LONG TIME AGO

. . . . . I used to fancy
In her the deathless romance of Cathay,
And declare she was the beauty of endless time and song:
How she laughed calling me too old-fashioned,
And advised I should change a bit of my point of view.
(She never talked romance and eternity.)
Her life,—Oh, yes, I did not know before its meaning well,—
Is that of a water or cloud passing in light:
Change is not her ruin but the way of soaring.
She is a plea for the evanescences and time:
"Life! Life, only Life," she exclaimed.
Her voice is the response to the deliverance and truth;

Her salvation lies in the accord of music of her soul:
She says she left literature a long time ago.
What a fool I was to think of her as a book of old poems!

TO A SPARROW

Sudden ghost

That danced out again from the shadow and rest,

Hunter of the memory and colour of thy last life,

Dost thou find the same humanity, the same dream?

Consecrator of every moment,

Holder of the genius for living,

Thy one moment might be our ten years:

Does it tempt, console and frighten thee?

Ghost of nerve,

If thy voice be curse,

It is with all thy soul,

If it be repentance,

It is with all thy body.

Oh would that I could relish the same sensation as thou!

PEACE

The tedious wheeling of night-Eternity! The shadowy peace mantles the world where Love and Dreams sleep in Infinitude.

O, new-born world of richest fantasy! The land and sea, moon and mortals wrap the Dimness about their breasts.

Ah, the world reposes with the mother-Solitude, under whose wings the stars and I harken to the sermon of Silence!

THE FANCY-BUTTERFLY

And here among the dandelions and pines,
Where angels robed in gossamer sing the Life,
The butterfly of Fancy I try to seize,
(Lo, her wing-flashes silver and gold,
Lo, her wing-flashes red and white!)
. . . . the butterfly now before me, and now behind me,
(Lo, her wing-flashes white and red,
Lo, her wing-flashes gold and silver!)
Why must you mock me so, fancy-butterfly?
Go from me now, Fancy, mocking elf,
Wearied of you am I, and leave me alone,
I from weariness one day shall die at your feet,

Go from me now, Fancy, let me rest!
Fancy, O cruel spirit, were you not once my own?
I have fed you before, and you slept in my heart.
And how strangely you flap and mock me to-day!
Were you not to me once anear, O Fancy-butterfly?
And how far-away you are to-day, deceiving soul!
(Lo, her wing-flashes silver and gold,
Lo, her wing-flashes red and white!)

RIGHT AND LEFT

The mountain green at my right:
The sunlight yellow at my left:
The laughing winds pass between.

The river white at my left:
The flowers red at my right:
The laughing girls go between.

The clouds sail away at my right;
The birds flap down at my left:
The laughing moon appears between.

I turned left to the dale of poem;
I turned right to the forest of Love:
But I hurry Home by the road between.

O AKI SAN

O Aki San and I walked into the Love valley,
I with my face towards O Aki San,
O Aki San with eyes upon the violets;
I never knew how sweet is the air
Till we walked arm in arm.
We danced and sang in the valley,
Under the wood of Life:
I am of whitest breath,
O Aki San of Spring beauty.
'Twas her achievement of grace that she
Thoughtlessly cast her eyelashes:
Her charm rose higher when she
Stopped confused, not finding the word

Fit for her special thought.
She sat herself down beside me,
Excused from her dignity,
And said that I must not think
About her face alone:
I know well that woman's humbling
Is her pride in disguise.
Her content grew to its full size
In my praise over her beauty.
She showered on me her rich smile
And bliss: I wondered how I
Could merit such a luxury.
My happy footsteps around her
Were those of an ecstatic priest
In wonder, in worship, and in prayer:
My flesh grew in her presence.

I made a heavenly promise with her eyes:

The beam of poem from her heart,

Which others could not see,

Sprang into my own bosom.

Her each word was a passionate kiss,

Her kiss made me understand what she could not speak.

And her eyes made her meaning simple.

When she softly folded her wings of smile,

Her beauty was melancholy grey;

When she washed her hair in dewy fancy,

Her laughter had a silvery sound:

Her touch of hand was the touch of a star.

She had innocent tact of love in each wink,

Mighty valour in her light smile.

God gathered the beauty

From flowers and seas,

And spread it in her face:

So every reflection of sea and flower

I could trace in her face:

Her face is an open book I cannot all read,

But with suggestion I am content.

NIGHT

I hail the goddess Night whose sacred melody weaves unheard flowery tales of a thousand years.

Her's the blessed task to bring peace to the heart that has parted from the land of Content.

O, Night,—a brooding love-mantle warming the mortal to full-bodied ease!

Behold, the gracious throne of the empress Moon, whose heaven beams messages unto me!

I, an humble among mortals, respond to a lulling strain of the velvety night!

O, idle Spirit of the Night, open the doors of the star-shrines to unite the earth with the heavens!

AMID THE TREES

I cease to be caustic and savage amid the trees:
Restlessness of satire is not my property.

'Tis enough miracle I roam to-day with the wind:
Tarry awhile, though thou hast to fly, my soul of poesy!

Happy to be biographers of each other, I and a bird:
We read histories, but not through song.

O mythological reality to have a star from flower dead:
If I ever die, seek a camellia intent!

THE DAWN ON A SHORE

I dreamed I crawled out of darkest hell,
Maddened by the torture of the terrible show,
With blood-shotten eyes numbed by useless gazing
Towards the bliss of the stars.
I crawled out, at last,
Into the breezes of dawn,
Into the breezes whose taste I had forgotten long.
I trembled, feeling the sudden stir of life;
The green odour of the dawn and immortality
Slowly revived my soul.
Was there one more dreadful to see
Than my face stained with the blackest stain,
Mercilessly touched by the leprous breath

Of the sufferers in the Pit?

I turned my face to the eastward,

I smelled the coming of morning

As the cattle smell the pool at a distance;

I ran to receive the golden kiss of the goddess of light and

of love

That rose from the seas with the throbbing song of glory—

The Song of the Resurrection.

Two angels danced around the sun, in white splendour:

The angel Joy in crimson dress,

With silvery flashes from her eyes,

With flowers in her richest hair of cloud;

The angel Faith in sable robe,

With silent brow and lips of infinity.

My cheek suddenly flowered frangrant and red;

My eyes beamed with the old glad dreams,

The morning dews of joy and love

Richly grossed my sun-kissed hair.

THE FALLING LEAVES

The sun (the reflection of my soul blown by the wind?)
Is very low in the forest:
What a heart-flame of the sun and falling leaves,
The hearts of the last song and beauty,
The beauty of intensity and weariness in life!

The falling light of the sun and silence flashes my picture
of heart,—
The picture of long ago drawn by M. G.;
I can trace, under the light, the secrets she hid with art and
tears,
How shone, I remember well, her finger-nails when she held
the brush!

The beauty of the falling leaves and sun passes into the
dusk,
And my picture of heart into the wilderness of sigh.

O YEN SAN

Far beyond the forest my Beauty abides,
(O Yen San sweet, O Yen San sweet):
Her bosom is the nest of a nightingale,
She hides Love and Dream in her hair,
Nine times a day she mirrors her face in a brook.
O Yen San sweet! O Yen San sweet!
A peony and O Yen San smila to the cloud and me:
Longing to know how fares she,
I step on the gossamer and poppy;
The shadow of a fir-tree is her shadow of arm:
Underneath the shadow I sing Love and Spring.
She seizes her guitar and strikes the strings,
(O Yen San sweet, O Yen San sweet):
Her voices white are the voices of a crane.

Out of the home of stars and breeze,

She cast her glance on me,

Like the cherry blossoms upon a Western dale.

O Yen San sweet! O Yen San sweet!

With O Yen San let me live,

And weave a langhter from the Eternity!

OUT OF A KINGDOM'S FIRE

The queen of the dews and of flaming hope,
Izanami* the mother ever thinks of the day
When, from the bridge of love and mist,
Her first song of glory sailed to the wind :
How high jumped the sun and moon,
The wood and river in brotherhood joy !

Come, children, out of a kingdom's fire,
Out of humanity's ruin and wound,
Come where your laugh shrilled the hills,
And set the waves dancing to the music of a star.
Forget the fall of hope and dust of love :
How dearer than love is a shiver of weed,
How less great human hope than a twitter of bird !

*In the beginning of the world the god Izanagi and the goddess Izanami stood on Amano Ukihashi or Heaven's Floating Bridge.

THE RAINS

The rains are born as a dream
And die as an art
In a moment:
Oh, phantoms of my hope and death!
My soul dances
On their silver strings:
Alas . . . . . I'm dancing
On my own saddest song.
The flowers, trees, mountains and world,
With the tears of the rains,
They wash their lives and sins:
Would my soul soar
Into a newer life,
Into the depth?

THE JAPANESE NIGHT

The scented purple breezes of the Japanese night!
The old moon like a fairy ship of gold
Softly through the dream sea begins to rock on:
(I hear the unheard song of Beauty in the moon ship,
I hear even the whisper of her golden dress.)
The hundred lanterns burning in love and prayer,
Float on the streets like haunting memories.
The silvery music of wooden clogs of the Japanese girls!
Are they not little ghosts out of the bosom of ancient age?
Are they returning to fulfill their thousand fancies forgotten?
A fancy world of the Japanese night
Born out of the old love and unfulfilled desires!

The crying love song of the Japanese night,

The *shamisen** music of hungry passion and tears!

O the long wail of heart through the darkness and love!

*A certain guitar of three strings.

THE HEIKE* SINGER

The griefs of emperors and warriors he sings,
The tears and love of ladies he sings,
With the sorrow and pride of old Japan,
His song, that of Autumn eve sad and twilight-grey,
His song, half a dream, half a pain,
Is to him a prayer to put sorrow away;
Under the shadow of centuries old,
How it totters like the falling ghosts of leaves:
His hope is to lay memory down, be released.

*The Heike or Heike Monogatari is the old Japanese epic on the rise and fall of the Heike clan.

IN JAPAN BEYOND

Do you not hear the sighing of a willow in Japan,
(In Japan beyond, in Japan beyond)
In the voice of a wind searching the Sun lost,
For the old faces with memory in eyes?

Do you not hear the sighing of a bamboo in Japan,
(In Japan beyond, in Japan beyond)
In the voice of a sea urging with the night,
For the old dreams of a twilight tale?

Do you not hear the sighing of a pine in Japan
(In Japan beyond, in Japan beyond)
In the voice of a river in quest of the Unknown,
For the old ages with gold in heart?

Do you not hear the sighing of a reed in Japan,

(In Japan beyond, in Japan beyond)

In the voice of a bird who long ago flew away,

For the old peace with velvest-sandalled feet?

TRAGEDY

The shadow of a lonely willow
Swings
Ghastly, ghastly;
The roads are lost
In the hoary-haired mists of eve,
A strange green light in the distance
Drifts
As a wandering fay;
I hear a wild cry
In the dark air,
In the stream,
In the stars.

SONGS OF INSECTS

Under the night of full breath,
Fired by the wine the golden goblet-moon spilt,
The insects are mad in their tremour of hearts:
There are a thousand voices of joy and dance,
But only one song of sadness and ghosts.
O passionate song of ones, I believe, returned to the ground,
Now awakening to the sad songs they still left unsung!
The spirit of a song is never content till it is fully sung:
O the passionate songs of night and wounded heart,
Are they not the cry of my soul of fever and dream?

THE AZALEAS

The flashes of azaleas red and white
Die and burn and die again :
The sun and clouds part and meet and part again.

Among the clouds of azaleas white and red
I see one flash never die :
O the idyl beauty of her face !

Hey for my heart's delight !
Is she not waiting for my love and song
Among the clouds of azaleas red and white ?

DREAM? LET IT BE SO, PRAY!

(Dream? Let it be so, pray!)
The flowers
Laugh high laughters,
Like a tide
Golden and deep:
My soul jumps
To welcome them.
(Dream? Let it be so, pray!)
In such an hour,
Shouting and wild,
I call you to join me,
Fair spirit,
And then like a star,

I am still,

With my heart full in joy.

(Dream? Let it be so, pray!)

But like a cloud,

Free and light,

Forced by fancy,

Knowing not where,

And yet,

I am glad

To wander away . . . .

(Dream? Let it be so, pray!)

HERE I HEAR A FOOTSTEP

Here I hear a footstep,
Its voice is grey and soft:
Is it that of a forgotten ghost?
So, a rain-drop drops, ...
Yes, one, two, three.

Up in the sky there is a cloud,
Its sight is old as Earth:
Who says it is the passing soul?
At my feet I see a falling leaf,
And the cloud is gone.

After the night wind blows
My soul follows to seek Rest:

Is the wind my mother lost?

Under the robe of darkness and love

My heart throbs happily with bliss.

SPRING

In my Lover's eyes brooding upon my soul,

In her gait along the Love-road, the road to Heaven and my heart,

In her smile blossoming from Speechlessness,

In her touch of hand, reviving my sleeping spirit,

In the song of the skylark,

In my poems,

In the breath of the wind,

In the water-bubbles,

In the lily,

In the tree,

Spring!

TO O SUZU CHAN THE PUSS

The voice of a night of hush,
(Is it the silver thrill of a star?)
The voice of the depth of love,
(Is it the falling note of a rose's petal?)
I hear in thy throat, O Suzu Chan, the very string
The musicians lost in the dusts of age;
O the voice of the fairies of dance
Beckening to the wind of sorrow,
O the voice of joy turned to pain!

JAPAN IN JULY

The vision of the sunset light
Of ghostly white:

The day is the twilight perfume
Too full to fly away.

O, Japan in milky July,
What an art of dream untold!

You know, over the blue and deep of the seas,
(O the wilderness of the Pacific!)

Like a lantern in love-air, she sways
In pain that is song.

EVENING

Evening with breezes that revive my memories,

Evening, my refuge where my sighing eyes hurry to meet with the stars!

All the leaves and flowers drop their tired brows in Evening's purple breath.

Lo! Adams and Eves turn their footsteps towards their homes.

I alone wait for the Moon's ascent longing to see my own shadow,—

My one wooer in the whole world.

VOICES

1st Spirit.

Into the leaves the spring of breeze strays,

I, with the bell rung, seek down the road of eve.

2nd Spirit.

The joy of the sea is that of Summer mist,

The rise and fall of tide is my prayer to the heart of song.

3rd Spirit.

Weaving a dress of journey, I'm Autumn spirit,

My way is where a leaf flies up to the sky.

4th Spirit.

I come down riding on the Winter snow,

Only to wait to be saved by the love of sunlight.

THE JAPANESE GIRL

O the oldest yet youngest love of the Japanese girl,
O her fading yet lingering scent of heart!
Let me kiss her ivory cheeks and let me die,—
In the kiss I taste the youngest soul out of the ages old,
I taste a rose out of the oldest brown earth.
Her smile is the mist rising to the morning sun,
Her cry the evening bell dying into the dusk,
She is a creation of sadness and love,—
A Spring lantern floating in the song.

CRADLE SONGS

I

Sleep, my love, your way of dream
By the fireflies shall be lighted,
That I gather from the heart of night.
Your father is off, good night,
To buy the honey from the stars:
The city of stars is away a hundred miles.
But by the dawn he will return,
Riding on the horses of the dews,
For you, with a drum as big as the sun.

II

Shed no tear, no tear!

Mother shall soon return from the moon, from the moon,

From the home of laughter and Spring,

With a bag of powder white for your face,

With a pearl-tree branch for your hair.

Dry your eyes, dry your eyes!

Mother shall soon return from under the sea, from under the sea,

From the home of honey and bliss,

With a sack of tea odourous with dews,

(You shall learn taste of tea next to Love,)

Which mother will steep in the purple haze, under a cherry tree,

By a singing river,

And she will teach you first steps under the bluest sky.

Shed no tear, dry your eyes!

III

The flowers are nodding
Above your head;
The flowers are made with sorrows seven,
And laughters three which are the best.

The sorrows seven your mother keeps,
(Mother's way is that of pain),
But the laughters three make you fair and gay,
I rock you, fairy boat on the tide of love.

Sleep, my own, till the bell of dusk
Bring the stars laden with a dream;
With that dream you shall awake
Between the laughters and song.

HAUTA*

I

His *haori*†

She hid,

His sleeves

She held.

" Must you go, my lord,"

Says she.

From the lattice window

She slid

The *shoji* slight,

And she cries:

" Don't you see the snow? "

*Japanese popular song.

†Over-coat.

II

After parting from you
I come in the forest of pine,
After parting from you,
I pass by the road of stars:
Oh, dews on the leaves,
Oh, tears on my sleeves!
Are they stars on the grass?
Are they my tears that fall?

I'm a night dew, beloved,
While you are the star:
The more you be wet,
The more your loveliness will grow;
The more you be sad,
The more your love will shine.

III

Is it wrong to love you so?

Olord, pity my heart that only knows to cry!

Even a bird hurries to build her nest:

Won't you be a plum tree for a nightingale of my heart?

O my love, won't you be so?

Sassa, yoiwa na!

'Tis for you that I sail on a sea of love,

Sassa, yoiwa na,

The sea may be forty five miles wide,

Sassa, yoiwa na,

I sail on the sea for love, my lord;

Is it wrong to love you so?

Sassa, yoiwa na!

IV

Did O Kin San marry?

Not O Shin San yet?

O Ren San goes willy-willy after every wind that blows.

O Gin San is a flirt,

She ever plays love through the year.

Oh, let them be so!

(*Soda, soda, hontoni soda!*)

Did the plum bloom?

Not the cherry tree yet?

The willow swings willy-willy after every wind that blows.

The rose is a flirt,

She ever plays love through the year.

Oh, let them be so!

(*Hontoni soda, soda, soda!*)

V

More than a cicada of song

The songless firefly burns his own heart.

Sassa, yoiya na!

Why in the world did I tell my love

To a lord who knows not love?

Sassa, yoiya na,

Three streaks of smoke I am, my lord,

From the Asama mountain high,

Only rising to turn to a cloud.

(Oh, I would fall as the rain, my lord!)

Sassa, yoiya na!

VI

The dew says she slept with the firefly ;
The firefly says he never slept with the dew.

She says yes, he says no,
He says no, she says yes.

Ha, ha, ha, the glow of the firefly betrays
The secret of his heart, *yoiya sa, ha, ha, ha !*

HOKKU*

I

Where the flowers sleep,

Thank God! I shall sleep, to-night.

Oh, come, butterfly!

'Hokku" (seventeen-syllable poem) in Japanese mind might be compared with a tiny star, I dare say, carrying the whole sky at its back. It is like a slightly-open door, where you may steal into the realm of poesy. It is simply a guiding lamp. Its value depends on how much it suggests. The Hokku poet's chief aim is to impress the reader with the high atmosphere in which he is living. Herewith I present you some of my English adaptations of this peculiar form of Japanese poetry.

II

Fallen leaves! Nay, spirits?
Shall I go downward with thee
'Long a stream of Fate?

III

Lo, light and shadow
Journey to the home of night:
Thou and I—to Love!

IV

My Love's lengthened hair
Swings o'er me from Heaven's gate:
Lo, Evening's shadow!

V

Waking or sleeping?

O "No-More" older than world!

Be 'way, earthly care!

VI

Speak not 'gain, O Voice !

The Silence washes off sins :

Come not 'gain, O Light!

Ever since I read, in 1903, Yone Noguchi's book, From the Eastern Sea, I have considered him to be a true poet: a poet (I am left to assume) from the Japanese point of view, and also a poet from the European point of view. Poetry is, I will not say "one and indivisible," but extending its ramifications all over the globe, "from China to Peru," from Tokyo to London or New Yerk. If there is poetry at the heart of the verses written in Nippon, its appeal holds good on the banks of the Thames. The standard for testing it is practically uniform and the same: the response which it yields to the test is modified according to the region from which it comes, but, from one or other region, this response is equally genuine and equally universal. And this sort of diversity is no disadvantage but an added delight. That an Englishman, if he undertakes poetry, should feel and speak as a poet, is the central requirement: but he should also feel and speak as an English poet: and so with a Frenchman, a German, an Italian, a Finlander, a Roumanesque, and a Japanese. We want each of them to be a poet nurtured by his own nationalism into poetry. If it is true poetry, it is at once national and in affinity with all other poetry the world over.

Having barely any acquaintance with Japanese poetry through the medium of a few translations here and there, I was surprised to find in Noguchi's former volume (From the Eastern Sea) so striking a combination of three constituents: a feeling for the beauties of Nature, a conversion of these into the aliment of the loving and contemplative soul, and what Europeans recognize as idealism. But indeed, within the last two or three years, nothing that comes from Japan can continue much to surprise us. We know Japan and the Japanese to be in the foremost rank of countries and nations: some of us, acquainted with her admirable powers in design and draughtsmanship, had credited this long ago. The land which produced a Hokusai and a Hiroshige—not to speak of a multitude of other supremely artistic artists—was not likely to be deficient in offspring qualified to shine in other arts, such as that of poetry.

I have now Noguchi's forthcoming volume, The Pilgrimage; I find that

he has progressed very considerably in the use of the English language, approximately as an Englishman or an American would use it. He is more English, without failing to be equally Japanese. There is the same subtle interchange, as in his former volume, of the images which the eye sees or the ear hears with the impression which these stamp upon the mind and the emotions. Noguchi has a singular faculty, more boldly applied than the Western nations are accustomed to, for merging sounds into sights, or vice-versa, the perceptions of sense into the abstractions and intuitions of the spirit: he brings to our consciousness matter and thought in a perpetual flux, phenomena adumbrating ideas, a homogeneous kosmos. It seems strange that this should be the sort of message coming to us from Japan; but there may be other things quite as strange in store for us from the same region. The Russians found out lately an odd thing or two, coming thence, which they had not at all expected. No poetry known to me bears more observably within it the conception—Life is a dream; and along with this, a corollary of the same conception—A dream is a phase of life.—Wm. M. Rossetti.

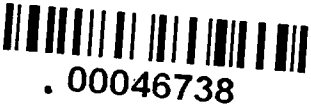
FROM THE EASTERN SEA

Fifth Edition

It has real suggestion and mystery.—*The Academy.*

Expressing itself in a new, personal way, which seems to bring some actual message or fragrance to us from the East.—*The Saturday Review.*

The book well reproduces the spirit of the East, both in its meditative repose and its luxuriant imagery.—*The Times.*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